Opening Speech at the International Forum on the Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization in Less Developed Regions

By
Professor Kuangdi Xu
Vice Chairman of National People’s Political Consultative Conference of China (NPPCC)

And
President of Chinese Academy of Engineering

October 15th, 2004, Beijing

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Today, we are pleased to see the opening of the International Forum on the Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization, a grand event co-sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and the Asian and Pacific Center for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM). This forum has won great support from government agencies such as the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC). I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, to express warm congratulations to this forum and sincere appreciation and warm welcome to all the experts, scholars and entrepreneurs gathering here.

Agricultural machinery represents the essential material basis for agricultural modernization. Human society has started its progress through the use of advanced production tools, and the application of advanced agricultural machinery is one of the key symbols that differentiate between modern and traditional agriculture. By using thousands of agricultural machinery, the human kind has managed to enhance the labor productivity, gain ten or even hundred times of farm produce, save large quantity of human resources for the second and third industries, thus making our world more diversified and colorful.

The Chinese Government has always been committed to agricultural mechanization, providing large quantities of equipment for the development of agriculture. In China’s efforts to feed over 22% of the world’s population with less than 7% of the world’s farming land, agricultural machinery has played an important and irreplaceable role. In order to accelerate further development of agriculture and rural economy and enhance Chinese farmers’ quality of life, the Chinese Government promulgated the Agricultural Mechanization Promotion Law.
this June, which will be enforced soon in November this year.

As the highest honorable and advisory academic institution in China’s engineering science and technology, the CAE has a few hundred high-profile members who have made brilliant achievements in, and great contributions to the cause of engineering science and technology in China. We will take this event as a good opportunity of our consultation and research programs on the development strategy for the agricultural machinery and mechanization of China, aiming at exploring the right directions for the nation’s agricultural mechanization initiative.

As the first official headquarters of UN organizations set in China, one of the major functions of UNAPCAEM is to strengthen technical cooperation and promote the development and expansion of agricultural engineering and machinery. Most members of UNAPCAEM are our neighbors who face the same tasks as China does, i.e. developing economy, improving agricultural production conditions and increasing farm produce supply. In this context, we have not only an extensive basis, but also share the same desires for cooperation.

This forum gathers many worldly renowned experts and scholars in the fields of agricultural engineering and mechanization, who are to exchange insights with their Chinese counterparts and share their visions on the technical progress and development prospects of agricultural machinery. This event will surely come up with proper strategies and measures for the development of agricultural mechanization in different areas of China, and render valuable experience and instructions for Chinese government’s reference at hand. We look forward to working with our counterparts from all over the world to drive the agricultural engineering science and technology to a new horizon through launching cooperation and exchanging programs and sharing valuable experiences and proven outcomes together.

Wishing the forum great success! Thank you!
Opening Speech at the International Forum on the Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization in Less Developed Regions

By

Liu Yanhua
Vice-minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology, P.R. China
October 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2004, Beijing

Mr. Chairman,
Honorable leaders,
Respective guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today, the International Forum on Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization in Less Developed Regions, jointly sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM) is open. First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of the People’s Republic of China, I would like to express our greatest congratulations to the Forum.

At the forum, foreign and domestic experts and representatives from academic institutions, government bodies and enterprises around the world are invited together to contribute their ideas on technological innovation and development strategy for agricultural equipment and mechanization. It is believed that it can provide helpful experiences and beneficial assistance for China and the world.

In the past hundred years, the wide application of farm machinery dramatically changed agriculture production methods and farmers’ life style, enormously increased farm efficiency and productivity, provided unlimited progress for rural society and strongly guaranteed world agricultural development and food security. It is common knowledge that agricultural mechanization played a very important role in the progress of human society, rural industrialization and agricultural modernization. Great achievements have been made in the social and economy development in China. For the supply of main agro-products, we realized historical changes from the long term shortage to the essence balance and the surplus in bumper harvests. It should be said that the role of agricultural mechanization is irreplaceable. Over the long term, great recognition and financial support has been given to the technological innovation and R&D of agricultural equipment and mechanization by the Ministry of Science and Technology. In the National S&T Programmes, priorities were given to the research and development of key equipment and technologies of breeding, cultivation,
fertilization, chemical application, harvesting, storage and products processing machinery suitable for main crops production. After several years efforts, the agricultural equipment R&D and technological extension service system, suitable for the Chinese conditions, has be established preliminarily. Many progresses have been achieved in paddy seedling insemination techniques and machinery, rice and wheat mechanical harvesting techniques and combining, mechanized raiser of rice seedlings, reclaiming machine of waste film and grain drying machinery. These made a great contribution to the realization of the leap transformation from the traditional agriculture to the modern agriculture of China.

Entering into the new era, as important production materials and the key carrier of advanced agricultural technologies, agricultural equipment has already become the un-mistakable key constituent of the national food security system. But, it is clearly recognized that the comprehensive technologies of agricultural equipment in China is still far behind that of requirements, and the average level of agricultural equipment in China is only about the level of that in the seventies of the 20th century in developed countries, and in some new areas with high-tech, the gap is even greater. Therefore, the Ministry of Science and Technology will continually support and strengthen the R&D affairs of Chinese agricultural equipment and mechanization development for the future, so as to provide S&T support for continuously improving the lever of agricultural equipment and accelerating the development of agricultural mechanization in China.

Ladies and gentlemen, China is in her key stage for fully developing a well-off society. Advancing the S&T in agricultural engineering, realizing agricultural equipment modernization and agricultural mechanization, will undoubtedly promote the sustainable and fast development of Chinese agriculture, and speed the step of China to the well-off society. With the aid of the forum, we expect to further promote the international cooperation in the field of agricultural engineering in aspects of research and management, and to promote the fast development in relevant S&T fields. At last, I wish the forum success and fruitfulness!

Thank you very much!
Opening Speech at the International Forum on the Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization in Less Developed Regions

By
Xue Liang
General Economist of the Ministry of Agriculture
P.R. China
October 15th, 2004, Beijing

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

I am very honored to attend the International Forum on Development Strategy of Agricultural Equipment and Mechanization in Less Developed Regions. First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) of the People's Republic of China, I would like to extend our greatest congratulations to the convening of the Forum. I would also like to express our sincere thanks to the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE), the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (APCAEM), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) of the People's Republic of China, the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of the People's Republic of China, and all participants from home and abroad for your attention and support to the career of agricultural mechanization of China.

China is the largest developing country in the world. At present, she has come into a significant phase for planning her economic and social development between cities and towns as a whole, establishing modern agriculture and relatively well-off society. The modern agricultural equipment is the foundation of modern agriculture, and agricultural mechanization is the main symbol of modern agriculture. To constructing our modern agriculture, speed-up the development of agricultural mechanization of China is the only way for us.

In recent years, Chinese government has promulgated series of support policies for accelerating the development of agricultural mechanization. For example, the government offered subsidy to encourage agricultural producers to buy farm machinery, this has greatly aroused farmers' enthusiasm for purchasing farm machinery; by strengthening technological
innovations and transfers, the level of research and manufacture of agricultural equipment in China has remarkably improved; new vigor has also brought into extension and service areas of agricultural equipment through promoting market-orient and socialization in farm machinery service. These policies created a good environment for the development of agricultural mechanization in China.

We have been successfully organized the trans-regional wheat harvesting using combine harvesters for many years, depending on summarizing the local farmers’ experiences. From the beginning of wheat harvesting, the combine harvesters transferred several hundreds of kilometers from one place to the another. In single-harvesting-season, the average service areas per unit combine reached 80-100 hectares from 20-27 hectares, and operating time extends to 20-30 days from 5-7 days; and for higher efficient combine harvesters, these even extends to over 40 days and 200-270 hectares, respectively. We realized high efficiency of agricultural production and high operation rate of agricultural equipment under the condition of small-scale agriculture, i.e. per capita cultivated land is only 0.52 hectare, less 1/40 of the European countries, and 1/400 of America. At present, the mode of trans-regional harvesting using combine harvesters has extended to the other field crops as paddy etc. and to the Southern from the Northern part of China. This initiated a kind of Chinese characteristic road for the development of agricultural mechanization.

The tenth session of the Standing Committee of the tenth National People's Congress approved the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization on June 25, 2004, and the Law will be put into effect on November 1, 2004. It foreshows that the agricultural mechanization in China is going to meet an unprecedented developmental opportunity.

Today, such well-known experts from home and abroad gather together at the forum, to discuss the development strategy and promotion policies of agricultural equipment manufacture industry and agricultural mechanization in less developed areas. It is believed that it will play an active role in strengthening international exchange and cooperation, in promoting the implement of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization, and in accelerating the development of agricultural mechanization in China.

I believe, with our joint efforts, the forum will achieve the desired results. it can make beneficial contributions for the development of the Chinese agricultural mechanization and modernization.

Finally, I sincerely wish the forum a great success!
Thank you!